

[P. 112-I]

133
142
285
291
301
492
487



13. Donkey with a load of charcoal. Where the terrain is not too rugged, donkeys or small horses do some of the carrying. The making of charcoal has helped to denude the mountains of their forests.

[314]

196 Musical Instruments

534 [197] the Haitian word for "twins." They are used primarily for secular music of the Cuban type, and may in fact be an importation from Cuba. The marassa is one of the few drums on which a finger technique is used; that is, striking with individual fingers rather than with grouped fingers. Marassas are often played in concert with guitars and marimbas.

The *basse* is the shallow finger drum resembling what in the United States is called the tambourine. Constructed in the pattern of an African prototype, its head is usually fifteen or eighteen inches in diameter and made of goatskin. Small metal disks sometimes are inserted in the frame to act as rattles. The head is kept well coated with resin or beeswax and is tapped and rubbed with the fingers. The *basse* is used only for secular music, except in the rare instances when it is used in Congo services. Some Haitians believe that the name of the instrument comes from the word *Basque*.

534 202 It is reported that signal drums were still in use a decade ago in remote sections of the southwestern peninsula. One of these instruments, according to description, is distinguished mainly by its large belly and small mouth; like the Juba drum, it is played on its side. Another style of signal drum has a slit in the side and is played erect, much like an African slit-log drum standing on end.

534 [191] Another percussion instrument is the bamboo stamping tube, called the *ganbo* or *ti kanmbo*. It is African in origin and probably takes its name from the Loango term for the same device, *dikanmbo*.² The stamping tube is simply a length of bamboo, open at one end and closed at the other by a natural joint membrane. The closed end is struck sharply upon the ground, and the tone comes from the open top. The device works like an inverted drum, the closed end functioning like a drumhead. A battery of four or five ganbos may provide the percussion music otherwise played by drums. The musician corresponding to the *bulatier* of the drum orchestra plays two small stamping tubes, one in each hand. The other musicians have one each, thicker and longer than the *bulatier*'s and producing deeper tones. Cupped hands are manipulated over the open ends for varying the sounds. This instrument has survived in various parts of the New World where Africans were settled, particularly other West Indian islands, Brazil, and Venezuela. In Venezuela the stamping tubes are called *quitiplas*.³ They have recently been reported from various areas of West Africa, including French Equatorial Africa.⁴

534 648 798 The ganbos had a singular burst of popularity in Haiti during the United States military occupation of the country after the first World War, when drums were often seized and destroyed. Drums could not

(115) ² Informant: Joseph Lengo, Brazzaville. Cf. P.354, Category 116. -- Analyst
³ Library of Congress album, Folk Music of Venezuela. Cf. P.354 Category 116. -- Analyst
⁴ Pamphlet accompanying recording of Equatorial Africa (New York: Folkways Library, 1950). Cf. P.354, Cat. 116. -- Analyst